DEMOCRATIC

GERMAN REPORT

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Adenauer is Threat to World Peace But —

NEW HITLER? NO!

By the Editor

The Krupps and the Thyssens, the cannon kings of the Ruhr who helped Hitler to power, have taken over full control again in West Germany.

That is the background of the elections on September 6th, in which Chancellor Adenauer was sent back to Bonn with a greatly increased majority.

In March 1933 the German electors, bamboozled by an intensive anti-Soviet campaign, went to the polls, and 41,8% of them voted for Hitler.

In September 1953, the electors of West Germany, misled by an even more intensive flood of lies about alleged Soviet aggression, went to the polls, and 45,2% of them voted for Adenauer.

Immediately the election results were known, Adenauer announced that he intended to "liberate" East Germany, and go on to grab parts of Poland. One day later he threatened to split and crush the West German trade union movement just as Hitler had done, because it had opposed his re-election.

All these things are a very serious warning to the friends of peace everywhere. But despite this, Adenauer is no Hitler, and the position today is very different from what it was in 1933.

Today, the Hitlerite generals and the nazi bankers are only in control in one part of Germany. In East Germany, the German Democratic Republic has been firmly established, and has become a centre for all progressive peaceable Germans.

Here, in the German Democratic Republic, the cannon kings have lost their factories, the Junkers have lost their estates, and the militarists have been stripped of all their power.

Prime Minister Otto Grotewohl summed up the situation clearly on September 13th, when he said:

"The German Democratic Republic does not stand alone. We have powerful friends and neighbours, who will not allow the Republic to fall prey to the Adenauers and the Eisenhowers.

"But we must warn the German people very seriously. If Adenauer and his American protectors manage to incorporate West Germany in the European Army and the North Atlantic Block, the reunification of West and East Germany in one state will become impossible, and war will threaten us all."

Everyone who reads these words can help the progressive people of Germany in their fight. See to it that your member of parliament, your senator, and your newspaper know how you feel about the danger which threatens Europe and the world if a new Wehrmacht is established in West Germany, and if West Germany is integrated in the western block.

DO NOT DELAY. DO IT TODAY.

(Drawing by Elizabeth Shaw in "Neues Deutschland", Berlin)

Adenauer's "Liberation"

"Our aim is to liberate our brothers and sisters in the eastern territories" stated West German Chancellor Adenauer on September 7th in Bonn immediately after his election. "We should stop talking about the reunification of Germany and call it 'liberation' instead."

Twenty years ago Chancellor Adolf Hitler who had just come to power announced that he intended to liberate his German brothers and sisters in eastern territories. Six years later he had plunged the world into war.

BIG BUSINESSMEN & NAZIS RUN WEST GERMAN PARLIAMENT

The new Bonn Parliament contains 42 directors of industrial enterprises, 34 other big businessmen, a former nazi admiral and a general. Here are short biographical notes on some of these "representatives of the West German people":

Robert Pferdmenges

Pferdmenges, Christian Democratic banker, is a close personal friend of Chancellor Adenauer. Reputed to be the richest man in post-war Germany, he laid the foundations of his fortune by "aryanising" the Jewish-owned Cologne banking house of Oppenheim. During the war Pferdmenges sat on the board of arms firms such as the Flick trust, and his name appeared on the original list of nazi industrial war criminals drawn up by the Kilgore Committee of the U. S. Senate. Despite this he was never prosecuted, and since 1949 has headed a committee of West German businessmen interested in closer business relations with the U. S.

Today Pferdmenges is the chairman of the Private Bankers' Association, and director of 42 companies, almost all of which would be interested in arms contracts.

Prince Otto von Bismarck

Otto von Bismarck, aged 56, one of the new representatives of the Christian Democratic Union in the Parliament, is grandson of Chancellor Bismarck, the "Iron Chancellor" of Kaiser Wilhelm I, famed as the prototype of Prussian militarism. He is one of the backers of the new bank launched in West Germany recently by Hjalmar Schacht, Hitler's financial wizard.

Dr. Fritz Schaeffer

Christian Democratic Minister of Finance. Writing in the "Regensburger Anzeiger" on May 4th 1933, a few months after Hitler came to power, he stated: "Adolf Hitler is the renovator of the Reich. We must awaken all forces and put them to work so that the Chancellor can accomplish his enormous tasks."

Dr. Martin Blank

Representative of the Free Democratic Party. Director of the "Gute Hoffnung" Foundries in Nuremberg, one branch of the Haniel Group of heavy industry. The Haniel Group directed by Heinrich Kost and Heinrich Reusch, old Hitler backers, made unprecedented profits out of the Second World War. One of the directors of Dr. Blank's foundry is Hermann Abs, who once figured on the "automatic arrest" list of nazi war criminals prepared by the allies.

Dr. Franz Josef Strauss

Christian Democrat from Bavaria, who made his mark in the previous Bonn Parliament by his fascist terminology. He declared in a speech on June 29th 1952 "The Prussian officer is the ideal type of German, even in Bavaria."

Admiral Helmut Heye

Christian Democrat, and Chairman of the neo-fascist "German Naval Federation." Was one of Hitler's experts in "annihilation weapons."

Hans-Christoph Seebohm

Chairman of the extreme right-wing German Party, he called last year for the integration in a "greater Germany" of large parts of Poland, Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, and Alsace-Lorraine.

Freiherr von Maltzahn

Christian Democrat. Former leading official in Ribbentrop's nazi Foreign Ministry. Tipped for the post of Minister for Foreign Trade.

Prince Hubertus z. Loewenstein

Represents the Free Democratic Party. Since returning from the United States, where he spent many years, Loewenstein has been making propaganda for "a renewal of the idea of the great German Reich," and for "the restoration of Germany within its historic frontiers". He has the support of "The Industrial Development Association of Hesse," a group of Frankfurt industrialists, who reportedly gave the Free Democratic Party. 200,000 marks for putting Loewenstein on the list of candidates.

Dr. Hans Wellhausen

Representative of the Free Democratic Party, director of the Maschinenfabrik Augsburg-Nürnberg, also a Haniel concern.

Dr. Otto Lenz

Representative of the Christian Democratic Union. Former leading official in the nazi Ministry of Justice. Today he is tipped to head a new West German Ministry combining features of Hitler's Propaganda Ministry, Gestapo and foreign spy service.

Hugo Scharnberg

Christian Democrat, Chairman of the Hamburger Kreditbank, successor bank of the Dresdner Bank, which financed Hitler.

"Warn British People" – Ulbricht

West German Chancellor Adenauer, as representative of West German imperialism, is a menace to all the peoples of Europe, and not only to the Soviet Union, Walter Ulbricht, East German Deputy Prime Minister stated on September 9th.

Walter Ulbricht gave this message for the British people:

"Tell the British people three things.

"First, that the German Democratic Republic is a workers' and peasants' state, and the power is in the hands of the workers and peasants. Therefore the West German big capitalists and landlords, together with their American backers, hate it, and conduct ceaseless attacks against it, because they wish to regain their power to exploit the working people of East Germany.

"Secondly, the German big capitalists have betrayed the national interests of Germany by the Bonn and Paris treaties, and have sold their country to the American financial interests. It is now the task of the working class in the whole of Germany to grasp still more firmly the banner of the struggle for national reunification on a democratic basis, and to rally the broadest masses of the people around the banner of national unity and independence.

"Thirdly, the aggressive forces of West German imperialism are a menace to all the peoples of Europe. It is an error to imagine that this aggressive policy is only directed against the Soviet Union. It is no less directed against France, Belgium, Holland and also Britain.

"This is already shown in the fight of the big German corporations and banks to capture British markets.

"Therefore there are the strongest common interests for the peoples of our countries to cooperate for peace and for a peaceful solution of the question of German unity on the basis of a united and peaceful democratic Germany."

Walter Ulbricht gave his message for the British people in the course of an exclusive interview with R. Palme Dutt, editor of the well-known British magazine "Labour Monthly."

"NEW PARLIAMENT MENACES EUROPE" – WEST GERMAN COMMUNISTS

The newly elected West German Parliament, with its right-wing majority, is a danger for the German people and for Germany's neighbours, the Central Board of the West German Communist Party stated after the election.

"This Parliament intends to push through the war treaties of Bonn and Paris, which would make the reunification of Germany impossible, and would directly threaten peace in Europe.

"The people of West Germany must visualise fully the effects of the decision taken. The new Parliament is a worse Parliament than its predecessor, dominated by the monopolists and financiers, the militarists, fascists and politicians of revenge who have led our people to catastrophe twice before, and who are determined to do it again.

"Only the decisive resistance of the entire people, particularly the working class, can stop this reactionary Parliament from carrying out its policy of force in both the home and foreign fields.

"The peace-loving people of the world will not passively watch Adenauer's aggressive policy in West Germany. They will prevent American war policies being carried out in their own countries, and will increase their help in establishing a united, peace-loving democratic and independent Germany.

"The results of the elections show our Party that we have not been able to convince the masses that the Communist Party is the only party in West Germany which honestly and courageously represents the national and social interests of our people. Above all we have not been successful in explaining to the people of West Germany, particularly the workers, that a united, peace-loving democratic Germany would be a Germany free of monopolists and bankers, militarists and fascists.

"Our Party has not yet been able to overcome the remains of fascist ideology, anti-Sovietism, nationalism and chauvinism, which still infect large sections of the population.

"The unstable and inconsistent policy of the Social Democratic leadership in the face of Adenauer's aggressive policy has confused the people. Today we see the results of the year-long poisoning of the minds of our people with anti-Sovietism propagated by the Social Democratic leadership. The anti-Communism of the Social Democratic leadership has proved to be only a help for the reactionaries, for the aggressive imperialist forces.

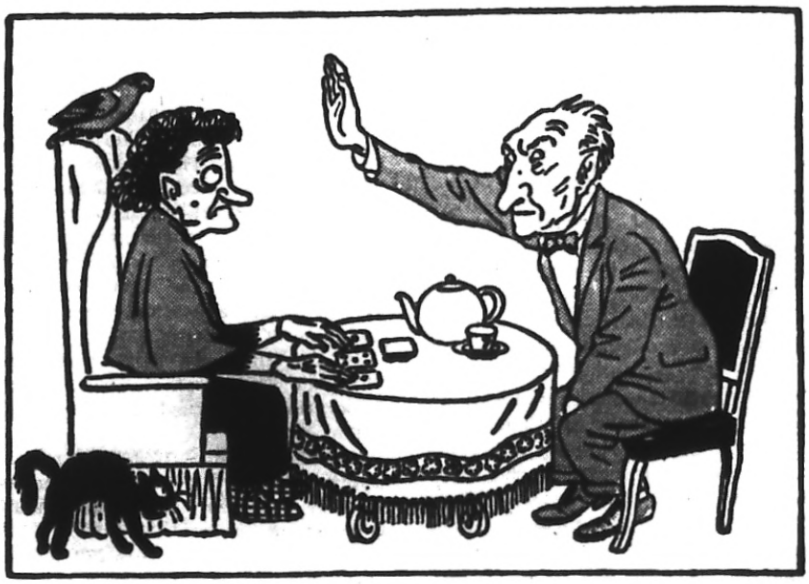
"The German working class, all Social Democrats and all patriots must learn from this the important lesson that it is necessary to counter the propaganda campaign against the Communists, against the Soviet Union and against the German Democratic Republic.

"The results of the election will make the peaceful reunification of Germany more difficult. For this very reason it is necessary to strengthen the struggle for understanding between the Germans themselves, and for understanding between the Four Great Powers on a peaceful solution of the German problem.

"In this dangerous situation, the Central Board of the Party calls on all Communists to consult with their Social Democratic, Christian and non-party work-mates on the measures to be taken to defend the national, democratic and social rights of the people."

RESULTS OF 1953 WEST GERMAN ELECTIONS

	Votes	Seats (1949 total in brackets)
Christian Democratic Union	**12,440,799**	**244 (139)**
Social Democratic Party	**7,939,774**	**150 (131)**
Free Democratic Party	**2,628,246**	**48 (52)**
BHE (Refugee Party)	**1,614,474**	**27 (—)**
German Party	**897,952**	**15 (17)**
Communist Party	**607,413**	**— (15)**
Bavarian Party	**465,552**	**— (17)**
All German People's Party	**318,525**	**— (—)**
Centre Party	**217,542**	**3 (10)**
German Reich Party	**295,615**	**— (5)**



"Your hand reveals you will soon be making trouble, Herr Adenauer"

(From "Szpilki", Warsaw)

TRADE UNIONS IN EAST GERMANY

By Herbert Warnke, Chairman of the Central Board of the Free German Trade Union Federation

In this article, condensed from a speech delivered in Berlin at the meeting of the Central Board of the Free German Trade Unions in Berlin on August 13th—15th, Chairman Herbert Warnke outlines the positive achievements of the trade unions in East Germany, sharply criticises some weaknesses, and outlines the role of the trade unions in a state working towards Socialism.

The trade unions played a leading part in the revolutionary changes—land reform and the confiscation of the property of monopolies and war criminals—which laid the foundations for our democratic state.

This is the basic difference between our trade unions and those in West Germany, where the trade union leaders may talk at conferences about doing such jobs, but never proceed from words to deeds.

These revolutionary changes in East Germany have led to a change in the functions of the trade unions. In the factories which belong to the people we have helped to increase labour productivity, improved quality and reduced costs through the Activist movement and the emulation contest movement.

As a result the standard of living of the population rose steadily since 1945—I need only recall the 12 price reductions in the state trading organisation. I need only recall the various wage increases in both nationally owned and private industry, and the fact that we have turned into reality the old trade union demand for equal pay for equal work.

Equal Pay

Do women and young people get equal pay for equal work in West Germany? Here, this is guaranteed by laws which the trade unions helped to work out.

If a worker falls sick in West Germany, does he get paid 90% of his wages? In most cases they have to get along on half pay when they fall sick.

Here in East Germany the old social security system was simplified and unified and finally placed under the control of the trade unions, in accordance with our old demand.

In the years from 1947 to 1952 alone, 1,311,984 workers had a chance of rest and recovery in 313 sanatoria and rest homes run by the social insurance, at a cost to the social insurance fund of 583 million marks.

The Free German Trade Unions today have 267 holiday homes in the spas and sea-side resorts which used to be the preserves of the rich. Have the trade unions in West Germany even 10 holiday homes?

From 1947 to 1953 2,097,50 workers were able to spend their holidays in these homes.

And do they have factory children's camps in West Germany, like the 4049 camps in which 530,000 of our children spent their holidays this year?

In our nationally owned factories we have a total of 516 club houses, and over 5000 club rooms, in which, for instance, over 11,000 folk art groups can rehearse and put on shows. Is there anything like that in West Germany?

Our factories, and the trade unions have over 8000 libraries; nearly 80% of our sportsmen play their games and do their physical training in factory sport groups, for which the state and the trade unions provided subsidies of about 30 million marks this year.

The activity of the trade unions also extends into the realms of education. Trade union delegates help in the selection of the children of workers and peasants who are to be sent to study in the Workers' and Peasants' Faculties. In West Germany, of course, there are no such facilities. The trade unions have also their own schools in which over 80,000 workers have so far been trained for posts in the trade union movement, and evening schools held in the factories have given adult education for large numbers of workers.

In the first six months of this year, the Free German Trade Union Federation disbursed the following sums:

Cultural work	15,237,987 marks
Sport	10,438,884 marks
Holiday schemes	10,265,488 marks
Children of trade unionists	8,684,272 marks
Material support for members	14,326,164 marks
Education of members and officials	9,626,575 marks

These sums exceed those disbursed for similar purposes last year by more than 10 million marks.

We propose that in future veteran trade union members, who have had membership for more than 40 years, and who are now in receipt of pensions under 100 marks, should receive a special grant from trade union funds of 10 marks monthly. This will cost about 18 million marks annually.

The success of our trade union work is shown by the fact that the trade unions in the German Democratic Republic now have over 5 million members. Before Hitler, in 1932, the General German Trade Union Federation had only four and a half million members in the whole of Germany.

Our trade unions support the new course adopted by our Government, since the raising of the standard of living is in the interests of the working class, and is one of the aims of the trade unions.

For this very reason our enemies are trying to spread the theory that the trade unions must be "politically neutral."

Workers' Aim

The workers' movement has always had the aim of reaching power in the state, of building a new state apparatus, and thus putting into effect the wishes of the people. Now, at the moment when the working class has built a new state apparatus, and is using it to put into effect the great ideas of the workers' movement, the ideas of Marx and Engels, these people appear and claim that the trade unions should be "neutral."

We must ask ourselves: can the trade unions be "neutral" in the fight for socialism, democracy, unity and peace? It must be clear to all that such "neutrality" would weaken the forces of peace and democracy, and only aid the warmongers, the monopolists and the reactionaries.

The theory of the "neutrality" of the trade unions is thus a theory hostile to the working class.

We have a positive attitude towards our democratic state, and based upon this we fight against everything which would tend to

drive a wedge between the state and the masses. That is why the trade unions fight against the bureaucratic actions of part of the state apparatus, against the suppression of mass initiative, against the conversion of some trade union organisations into mere dependencies of state organisations, and against every attempt on the part of factory managements to limit the codetermination of rights of the trade unions.

It must be very strongly emphasised that the trade unions are not a dependency of the state, and they cannot be given instructions by state bodies. Under certain circumstances they must stand up for the rights of their members against certain parts of the state apparatus.

Bland Decisions

What actually happens, in practice, sometimes? Various state bodies, for instance, blandly decide that trade union representatives should take part in the work of some commission. It even happens now and again, that factory managements (of nationally owned factories, ed.) think that they have the right to spend the money in the trade union funds, or to give orders to factory union committees.

This is absolutely false, and is bound to make members regard our trade unions as mere dependencies of the state.

We must demand, in particular, from the State Planning Commission, that trade union representatives be included in the planning of the economy. It must become an absolute principle that no measure should be carried out affecting wages and conditions of work without the prior approval of the trade unions.

No Yes-men

The same thing applies to the relations between the factory management and the factory trade union committee. Of course, they must cooperate, for both of them work in the interests of the workers and the fulfillment of the plan.

But the cooperation must not be allowed to consist of the factory management issuing orders and the trade union committee acting like a yes-man. In their cooperation both of them have special tasks to do.

The factory management has above all the task of fulfilling the plan and the tasks set by the state; this means that it may not pay enough attention to the interests and the rights of the people who work in the factory. The factory trade union committee, for its part, has the task of seeing to it that the plan is not fulfilled at the cost of the workers in the factory; it must fight against all forms of bureaucracy, see to it that all safety precautions etc. are applied, and generally represent the interests of the workers.

If this leads to temporary differences of opinion between the factory management and the trade union committee, this is absolutely understandable and normal. Frank discussion will lead to a solution which will guarantee both the fulfillment of the plan, and the protection of the interests of the workers.

The new course sets the trade unions big tasks, but it gives us the opportunity of achieving these tasks if we allow ourselves to be guided by the principle of representing the interests of the working people.

We appeal to all members of the trade unions to help us to do our task more effectively than hitherto, through criticism, proposals and active cooperation.

SPIKE THAT LIE!

10th September 1953

The Editor
Melbourne Herald
Melbourne, Australia

Sir,

On September 1st the Herald published a story under the headline "Reds Tip Off Their Callers" datelined Berlin, Monday, Herald Special Service.

The story alleged that the Socialist Unity Party in East Germany had issued a list of "horrid names" to be used in referring to the British and Americans. The report said that the names, such as "monkey-killers" and "leprous heroes" for the Americans, had been officialised by the Socialist Unity Party in a "Glossary of Approved Terms of Abuse for Alluding to the Western Nations".

I live and work in East Berlin, and if such a glossary had in fact been issued, I, as a journalist, would certainly have known of it. I can only conclude therefore that the story is a blatant forgery.

Similar stories have appeared in the West Berlin press from time to time, and the Herald story is probably based upon one of these. The West Berlin Press, almost without exception, devotes a major part of its space to campaigns for a new war in the interests of German militarism, and many former leading nazis own and work for papers there.

I expect that the Herald would be very cautious about accepting at its face value a "news story" appearing in a newspaper published by British fascist Sir Oswald Mosley. Why accept the stories launched by German nazis?

I herewith challenge you, or your Berlin correspondent, to produce proof of the genuine nature of the story. The best way would be to produce the alleged "Glossary". If you cannot produce this proof, then I hope that in the interests of truth in journalism you will print a retraction of your story.

Yours sincerely,

John Peet

(Since writing the above letter I have discovered that the Berlin correspondent of the Melbourne Herald is Mr. Antony Terry, who works for the British Kelmsley Newspapers. The same ridiculous story appeared in the London "Sunday Times" on August 30th.

Mr. Terry has not the excuse, which some foreign correspondents have, that he does not know the language, and is therefore dependent upon secretaries and translators. He speaks German almost perfectly, and knows perfectly well that this story and his other inventions are downright lies. What "horrid name" would fit him best? J. P.

Readers can help us to spike the lies about East Germany in the big business press by sending us cuttings. Please write the name of the newspaper and the date on each cutting, and mail it in straight away, before the lie has a chance to get cold.

HUGE DEALS AT LEIPZIG FAIR

Unprecedented business was done at the Leipzig Trade Fair at the beginning of September, final figures show.

Total export and import contracts concluded reached the figure of 1,023 million rubles (about 250 million dollars), almost double the figure reached at last year's fair. Over a quarter of the export contracts signed were with western countries.

West German firms purchased East German goods to the value of 122 million marks at the fair, and East German trading organisations gave orders for 94 million marks worth of West German goods.

Business at the fair, which was visited by over 500,000 people, was not of course confined to foreign trade. Orders placed at the fair for consumer goods for internal consumption amounted to thousands of millions of marks, and will mean that there will be far more goods available in East German shops in a few months' time, as the new policy of the Governmets gets under full way.

The international importance of the fair was shown by the fact that more than 5000 foreign businessmen, from a total of 51 countries, travelled to Leipzig. Many big deals in East-West trade are reported to have been concluded.

BRITISH M. P.s ON ADENAUER

"We expected a dirty campaign. But this deluge of lies and forgeries—all personally endorsed by that man of God, Konrad Adenauer,—that is more than we bargained for," said West Germany's Social Democratic press chief Fritz Heine in a talk with British Labour Member of Parliament Richard Crossman a few days before the election.

Mr. Crossman reports the remark in an article on the election in the London "New Statesman and Nation" of September 5th. Here are some more interesting extracts from his article:

"... the struggle is appallingly unequal. Almost the whole of the press is bitterly anti-Socialist and so, of course, is the heirarchy. Last Sunday I went to church in a small town north of Regensburg. The priest made it crystal clear that a vote for Ollenhauer (Social Democratic leader, ed.) is a vote against Christianity ...

"Finally, the Chancellor enjoys the financial support of industry. There is no limitation of any kind on election expenses and no need to publish accounts; business men have contributed millions of marks to the Christian Democratic Union ...

"The bourgeois and petit-bourgeois elements — shopkeepers, salesmen, small business men, professors and teachers — who supported Hitlerism in the past and who will in due course support a new Nationalist Revolution, are doing well enough in the boom to vote for German free enterprise.

"The real fault of the Social Democratic Party ... is the kind of gulf between the realistic politicians in Parliament and the idealists of the rank and file, which we know so well over here. The rank and file want a much more decisive and independent programme than Ollenhauer is ever likely to give them."

The British people must be careful not to allow themselves to be dragged into war by Adenauer, former Labour War Minister Emmanuel Shinwell warned in a letter printed in the London "Evening Standard" on September 9th.

The letter stated:

"I see no reason to rejoice at Adenauer's runaway victory in the German election. That victory may yet be a menace to the peace of Europe.

"Already it is clear that Adenauer has one aim above all others — to secure the return to Germany of her Eastern territories. But by what means?

"It may be that at the moment Adenauer favours negotiations with Russia. But will that still be his mood — and more important, will it still be the mood of a resurgent and soon-to-be rearmed German people — if and when negotiation for a United Germany fails? Or will there be a desire to grab by force what the Russians refuse to concede by parley?

"I suggest that the present attitude of the British people towards Germany should be one of cool caution, and that there should be a determination never to allow ourselves to be dragged behind Germany into a conflict over territories which mean nothing to us."

Life for War Crimes

The East Berlin City Court passed life sentences on two nazi war criminals on September 11th. The two criminals, Nazi Major Erwin Helm and nazi lieutenant Bruno Baehr, were found guilty of killing several hundred persons in the last weeks of Hitler's war.

They had headed a drum-head court martial, which travelled from place to place executing alleged deserters, without making even the pretence of a trial in most cases.

Other members of the court martial were tried and acquitted in Wuerzburg, West Germany in November 1952.

Rommel's Soldiers For Adenauer

The veterans of the nazi armies should serve the Adenauer Government with the same "courage and toughness with which they fought in the Wehrmacht", West German Minister of the Interior Robert Lehr told soldiers of the Hitlerite "Afrika Korps" meeting in Hanover for a fascist rally on September 13th.

Yank Sheet Folds

The Frankfurt edition of the official American propaganda organ in German, the "Neue Zeitung" ceased publication on September 12th. The paper has recently been losing over 2 million dollars yearly, and the American authorities concluded that this money could be more useful spent in bribing other newspapers to print their propaganda.

Blitz Experts Visit Britain

More than one hundred West German air experts visited the British aircraft show at Farnborough in the second week in September.

The visitors included several whose names were familiar to everyone who remembers the nazi war communiques: Willi Messerschmitt, who designed the ME 109, intended to spearhead Hitler's planned invasion of Britain; Alfred Weber von Focke-Wulf, who designed fighters for the nazis which during one phase of the war gave the Luftwaffe an advantage over the RAF; and Ernst Heinkel, who designed the bombers which blitzed London and Coventry.

Chinese Students

Thirty-two young Chinese arrived in Berlin on September 8th to begin their studies at universities in the German Democratic Republic.

THE MAN FROM HOLLAND

By Stefan Heym

A businessman from Holland came to visit us in Berlin after he had attended the Leipzig Fair. I had got to know him years ago in Amsterdam as a hard-working man, like many of his sort, a good family man — but in many respects he was permanently in blinkers.

He was very excited when he came into our house, and could scarcely wait to shake hands before he exploded.

"It's absolutely ridiculous" he fumed. "Do you know what happened to me in Holland when I bought my ticket? The people in the travel bureau kept on saying 'Are you quite sure you want to go? If you go, it's at your own risk, you know' and things like that."

The Dutchman stopped and laughed.

"You know, if you read our newspapers you get the idea that people are falling dead of starvation in the streets here, and that appalling epidemics are raging in Leipzig ... And then I get here and find a dream of a market. What couldn't I sell here! The people have money!"

"Some of them", I said.

"Look, I've got eyes in my head" said the man from Amsterdam. "I know when people can afford to buy things. I have seen how people are dressed, on the streets and in the trains — the average is better than at home in Holland ..."

"Well, I don't know ..." said I.

"Hell, have I got to convince you too?" said the businessman. "You know, I keep on landing in the craziest situations here. I don't like your system of government. I'm a businessman, and I don't like anybody to tell me what to do in my business. But when I talk to people here, I, the foreigner, the capitalist, you might almost say the enemy, I have to tell them how well off they are. It's crazy."

I had to agree that he had something there.

"There I am sitting in the train", said the man from Amsterdam. "There's another man in the compartment, and he starts grumbling. I asked him what he was. A worker, said he. How much did he earn? Six hundred marks, said he. And his wife? Yes, she earned quite a bit too ... And yet he was grumbling. He was earning six hundred marks and his wife was earning too, yet he was grumbling. You can't find a worker in Holland who earns six hundred gulden, and the mark and the gulden have the same value.

"Do you know why the man was grumbling? Because someone else in his factory was earning seven hundred, and because he had taught this second man his trade. Now he was shooting his mouth off about the injustice of it all ..."

After we had had a drink I proposed to the Dutch businessman that we should go and have a look at the Stalin Allee.

"No, not the Stalin Allee", said my friend. "That's all propaganda, and I don't want propaganda. I want to make up my mind myself."

"All right" I said. "But I should like to have your opinion on our propaganda."

So we went to the Stalin Allee, first to the building site, so that he could convince himself that they were really houses, and not just stage settings, and then to the long avenue of imposing completed buildings.

For a long time he said nothing. He scratched with his fingernails at the marble entrances to the blocks of apartments; he stopped in front of the shop windows and you could see that he knew something about dressing shop windows. And then he said: "Pretty good. Not at all bad, really."

He said nothing for a short while, and then he added: "They live pretty well here, your big shots, eh?"

"What big shots?" I asked.

"Those who live here, of course" he replied, impatiently.

I took his arm, and started out towards the next entrance. I wanted to ring at the first door we came to, and ask who lived there.

But I did not need to ring the bell, for at this moment a little girl came running down the stairs. She had a smudge of dirt on her laughing face, and she was obviously on the way to play with some friends.

"Just a second" I said to the girl, "do you live here?"

"Yes" said she.

"What does your father do?" I asked.

"He's a mechanic" said the little girl, and ran on out of the door.

"Well" said the Dutchman as he sucked his lower lip.

"Yes, well" said I.

(Translated from German)

New Course Means Better Living

The new course in the policy of the German Democratic Republic will prove to the working people of West Germany that it is better to live in a state run by the workers and peasants than in a state run by American and West German millionaires, Deputy Prime Minister Walter Ulbricht stated on September 9th.

Writing in the Berlin newspaper "Taegliche Rundschau," Herr Ulbricht predicted a continuing rise in living standards in East Germany in the near future.

He pointed out that in the second half of 1953 there would be 30 % more goods in the shops than in the first half of the year, and that this increase would continue.

The price reductions already made in the past three months were only a beginning, but together with wage increases for the lowest paid groups of workers they had resulted in a rise in living standards.

The slowing down in the tempo of development of heavy industry had naturally created some difficulties, and demanded considerable plan changes and changes in the disposition of the labour force, but these difficulties would be overcome, the Deputy Prime Minister stated.

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More Cakes

From October 1st private bakers in East Berlin will be able to sell cakes and buns without ration tickets. At the same time they plan to increase the assortment of cakes available from the present 37 to over 100. The necessary supplies of almonds, marzipan, chocolate and so on have been made available.

Hitherto private bakers took sugar and fat ration tickets for cakes, while ration-free cakes were available at higher prices in the state stores.

P. S. This is not a Marie Antoinette "Let them eat cake" story, of course. Bread in great variety has been available for years, off the ration, in both private and state stores. It is considerably cheaper than bread in West Germany.

BERLIN NOTEBOOK

By John Peet

In the past few numbers of GERMAN REPORT we have given some statistics on the improvement in the standard of living in the German Democratic Republic since the Government decided to strike out along a new course three months ago.

There have been astronomic imports, wage increases for millions, price reductions, improvements in the social services, all of which have affected large sections of the population.

Carpet Tacks

But what have I personally noticed most? Of course I have enjoyed the greater variety of food in the shops, including some extraordinarily tasty canned fish from Poland; but the new course came home to me most closely in the form of carpet tacks.

It was like this. At the beginning of June I moved with my wife into a new apartment. It is a very nice apartment, but when I wanted to nail down the carpet in the front, I found there were simply none of those common little black carpet tacks to be bought.

When I asked for them in the shops, they just looked at me pityingly: they hadn't had tacks for months. It was one of these infuriating little shortages which are a natural accompaniment of a programme of industrialisation being forced ahead at high speed; the manpower and raw materials are simply not available to make all the carpet tacks, pins and razor blades which the customers want.

Substitutes

Most of the shortages produced were not absolute and unconquerable—I managed to get round the tack shortage by fastening my carpet down with drawing pins (thumb tacks for American readers), but they were not very satisfactory.

Putting the new course into effect did not mean, of course, that the shops were immediately filled with all the goods which had been in short supply, but a few days ago I summoned up my courage, went into a shop and asked for tacks.

And there they were, by the crate.

So our hall carpet no longer skids all over the place when Finkle and Doubleyou, our cats, turn the hall into a race track.

Incidentally, the new course has pleased the cats, too, for kippers, their favourite food, have been reduced by 50 %, and are much more plentiful.

This morning the little carpenter round the corner told me that he is getting a much bigger allotment of wood now, and that he can make me the built-in cupboard which I had been inquiring about.

These are only small things, of course, but they are signs of better living for everybody ahead. In the next few months I anticipate being able to tell readers more and more about the way everybody here is living better.

Good for Britain

September 5th was rather a good day for British stage-craft, both classical and modern, in East Germany. In East Berlin a magnificent version of Shakespeare's "Othello" was staged in the Max Reinhardt's Deutsche Theater, and in Leipzig an opera by Alan Bush, modern British composer, received its world premiere.

I was not in Leipzig myself for the opera premiere, but friends who were there tell me that it was a performance to be proud of. The opera, "Wat Tyler," tells the story of the English peasant revolt at the end of the 14th century, and it abounds in mass scenes into which opera director Heinrich Voigt had obviously put his heart.

Alan Bush, the composer, who himself conducted the world premiere, has already been approached by the directors of three other opera houses in the German Democratic Republic who want to produce the work. It is a curious position that a modern British opera, on a British theme, by a British composer, should become familiar to music-lovers in East Germany while it has never been performed in Britain.

Bard in E. Berlin

While Alan Bush was receiving his ovation in Leipzig, I was myself enjoying "Othello" in Berlin. Othello was played by Willi E. Kleinau, a big man with an enormous voice, who fits the part perfectly, and Iago by Ernst Busch. Most people outside Germany know Ernst Busch as a singer of worker's songs; in the pre-Hitler period his distinctive rasping voice became internationally famous, and one of his more recent songs "Go home, Yank," to the tune of "Tramp, tramp, tramp the boys are marching" has gone round the world.

But before he ever started to sing, Ernst Busch was an actor, and Berlin theatre-goers in the past few years have enjoyed his performances in a number of roles.

I had never seen him play a part in one of the classics before, and could not really visualise him in the part. But Busch, who runs the East German gramophone record production firm apart from his singing and acting, was every inch a dastardly Iago, and managed to make the part really believable, which is rather exceptional.

Song Books

Incidentally, we still have some copies of the little book of international workers' songs published by Ernst Busch (he does that as well as singing, acting and making gramophone records), which we offered to readers in June. Letters came from 19 countries but there are still a few left.

The pocket song book gives the music and the German text of about 150 songs, and includes many new democratic German songs as well as the traditional songs of the international workers' movement.

We shall be glad to send a copy to any reader who sends us the names and the addresses of five people to whom we might send sample copies of GERMAN REPORT. Block letters please.

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